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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on a year-long inquiry into the possibility of democratic education in traditional environments. The study was guided by the questions: (1) what are the teacher qualities needed to transcend the structures of schooling to engage in democratic practices?; and (2) how are these practices manifested in the classroom? The researcher interviewed and observed three secondary social studies teachers who expressed a commitment to democratic ideals. The results of the study were that it is the personal and moral commitments of the educator that allow democratic pedagogy to take place. Pedagogical identity is formed from personal human characteristics and is characterized as an integrated identity as opposed to the rational-technical model prevalent in school settings. Teacher qualities that constituted pedagogical identity were depicted as residing in the moral, intellectual, and personal dimensions of human personality. The teachers in the study practiced democratic education by moving into the free spaces of the structures of schooling. In these free spaces, teachers created a democratic classroom climate, used connected knowledge, and promoted active learning. (EH/Author)

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IMAGES OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATORS

by

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ABSTRACT

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This paper is based on a year-long inquiry into the possibility of democratic education in traditional environments. The study was guided by the questions: (1) What are the teacher qualities needed to transcend the structures of schooling to engage in democratic practices? (2) How are these practices manifested in the classroom? In order to explore these questions, the researcher talked to and observed three secondary social-studies teachers who had expressed a commitment to democratic ideals. The results of the study were: It is the personal and moral commitments of the educator that allow democratic pedagogy to take place. Pedagogical identity is formed from personal human characteristics and is characterized as an integrated identity as opposed to the rational-technical model prevalent in school settings. Teacher qualities that constituted pedagogical identity were depicted as residing in the moral, intellectual, and personal dimensions of human personality. The teachers in the study practiced democratic education by moving into the free spaces of the structures of schooling. In these free spaces, teachers created a democratic classroom climate, used connected knowledge, and promoted active learning.

IMAGES OF DEMOCRATIC EDUCATORS

This paper is based upon a year-long study in the classrooms of three secondary social studies teachers. The project was an inquiry into the possibilities of democratic teaching practices in traditional environments. The study was guided by two questions: (1) What are the qualities of secondary public-school teachers who attempt to transcend traditional environments to engage in democratic practices? Traditional public schools are defined as those that are hierarchically organized with the central office or bureaucracy making decisions at a level away from the school site. (2) What are the methods and procedures used by these teachers to articulate democratic values in the classroom?

The three teachers who participated in the study were: Ellen, a white female U. S. history teacher who taught at a large rural-suburban high school in Columbia county, Georgia. The majority of the student population was middle-class with some diversity. Mike, an African-American male, taught ninth-grade civics at an Augusta, Georgia inner-city school with a majority African-American student population. A white male, David, taught tenth-grade American government in a large Columbia county suburban high school with a middle-class student population.

Democratic Teacher Identity

The concept of teacher identity was derived from Max van Manen's (1994) idea of "pedagogical identity" (p. 157). Van Manen argued that teacher identity embodies a moral and personal dimension in addition to professional knowledge. He maintained that teacher identity is formed from human characteristics combined with professional knowledge and expertise. Van Manen described the personal characteristics of pedagogical identity as the "virtue-like qualities of pedagogy" (p. 157). He pointed out that he used the term virtue in the ancient sense and recognized that the latter-day interpretation of virtue has acquired the derogative connotation of a rigid adherence to the hegemonic morality of society. Contemporary educational research, reviewed by leading scholars (Brophy & Good, 1986; Gage, 1986; Rosenshine & Stevens, 1986),

has fragmented teacher identity into a rational-technical model which separates the personal from the professional.

As the teacher stands in a hierarchical relationship with administrators, both school site and county, it would be a logical outcome for teachers to maintain rigid, authoritarian pedagogical methods and impersonal classrooms as is true of many teachers throughout the nation (Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; McNeil 1986; Powell, Farrar and Cohen, 1985; Sizer, 1985). As the Georgia restrictions on teacher activity are similar to schools across the nation (McNeil, 1986; Sizer, 1985), it is helpful to explore the qualities of teachers who implement democratic education. The teachers in this study were similar to traditional teachers in that they were expected to work within the same curriculum strictures, to produce measurable results, and to maintain a certain classroom efficiency and order.

The qualities and value commitments that will be discussed in this paper are not to be interpreted as a model for democratic teachers, as this chapter is an interpretive description of the way these teachers inhabit the world and acquire the know-how that informs their practice. The conceptualization of the democratic teacher identity will be discussed as having a moral, intellectual, and personal dimension. It must be emphasized that while these teacher qualities are discussed as residing in different dimensions, the writer does not view the democratic pedagogue as a fragmented personality but existing as a fully integrated human being embedded within a connectionist philosophy.

The Moral Dimension of Teacher Identity

The moral commitments and values of teachers constitutes the moral dimension of teacher identity. The commitments of the teachers in the study were to social equity, to the professional community, to students, and to the school community. These commitments were embedded in a connectionist philosophy. The overarching quality of the three secondary social studies teachers in this study is a connectionist (Goodman, 1992a) or relational (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings 1988, 1989, 1992, 1994) philosophy. These teachers are related to the world around

them and to other humans inhabiting that world. As discussed in Chapter 1, Goodman's (1992a) theory of connectionism was built upon Apple's concept of the connection among all living things and their environment. Goodman explained that individuals with this philosophy felt a sense of caring and responsibility to others and to the earth on which we live.

Gilligan (1982) expressed the idea that a different moral universe was based upon people's connections to one another. She defined the relational philosophy as based upon human connections. She found that women based moral decisions upon how their decision affected the people with whom they were connected. Gilligan refuted Kohlberg's moral theory based upon abstract universal principles of human rights, maintaining that his view is rule-based. She stressed that in Kohlberg's moral theory there is a greater sense of separateness from others. Noddings (1989) expressed the idea that the pain of separateness is the greatest evil. Noddings (1988, 1989, 1992, 1994) expanded upon Gilligan's work and applied it to pedagogy in her conceptualization of the caring individual and the caring teacher. She described the relationship of mother and child as the ideal caring relationship. Therefore, the caring teacher is one who cares for the student and who is concerned for his/her socioemotional, intellectual and physical growth as was manifested by teachers in this study.

Van Manen (1994) speaks of the "pedagogical relation" (p. 142). He noted that the relationship between adult and child is a different type of relationship from any other human relationship. He stated, "The pedagogical relation is fundamentally a personal relation. In this relation the adult intends the maturation or education of the child" (p.144). Drawing upon Western European pedagogical tradition, he explained that the pedagogical relation is personal, intentional and interpretive. The personal part of the relationship as explained by van Manen is very close to Noddings' (1992) caring relationship of the mother and child. This relationship is part of the human experience and cannot be replaced by instrumental techniques of education. In the intentional part of the relationship, the adult or teacher cares for the child at his/her present stage of development and also for the possibilities of what the child may become. The interpretive part of the relationship is for the teacher to understand the activities and experiences of the child and to be able to judge

the time when the child can assume more responsibility.

Noddings (1992) emphasized that both males and females are able to relate to and nurture young humans as is demonstrated by the males in this study. Noddings used the term "parental" (p. 45) rather than maternal to describe the infant-parent relationship in order to show that male parents are engrossed in the growth and development of their children. The fact that males in education function as caregivers and nurturers has been illustrated by male educational researchers (Goodman, 1992a; Kreisberg, 1992).

Even though the teachers in this study worked in traditional schools, the connectionist philosophy served as the driving force for their work and sustained their commitment to social equity, the professional community, the school community and students. These were not individuals who had managed to compartmentalize their lives into boxes labelled personal life and professional life as happens with other teachers. The connectionist orientation was manifested most fully in the way these teachers acted in their world to bring about democratic education. The commitments that will be discussed as comprising the moral dimension of teacher identity are commitment to social equity, commitment to the professional community, commitment to students, and commitment to the school community.

Commitment to Social Equity

Individuals with a connectionist philosophy are committed to social equity and to diversity among people. They do not discriminate against people based on class, race, gender, or ethnicity (Gilligan 1982; Noddings 1988, 1992; Goodman, 1992a). A perspective of social and intellectual superiority is not characteristic of the democratic personality (Maslow, 1970).

Public schools which should be public spaces are following the trend toward stratification as affluent suburban communities have well-financed schools while inner-city and rural communities struggle with minimal resources. This stratification of schools furthers the process of separating the rich from the poor. Conventional teachers ignore the disparities in schools, and deny students' need for social and political efficacy. In their classes, they present an idealized view of government and society. Students become alienated from school as this idealized view is

dissonant with their life experiences.

In this era of rampant individualism and self-interest (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swidler, & Tipton, 1985), it is difficult to find people who care about social justice, however, the teachers in this study believed that building a better society was a way to ensure a better life for their students and their families. Self-interested individuals see the quality of their lives from a very narrow perspective, and this view includes a very closed group of individuals. These individuals do not perceive improvements in the public realm as contributing to the quality of life for themselves or their friends and family. The individuals in this study saw the promotion of social equity as contributing to their own and everyone else's benefit.

Commitment to the Professional Community

Ellen, Mike, and David saw teaching as a profession, and spent time and energy to improve the educational profession. Many teachers attempt to carry out their duties without concern or care for the larger profession of which they are members. Leading educators (Cuban, 1993; Leming, 1991; Sarason, 1990) have described the profession as fragmented. Sockett (1993) noted that the education profession consists of classroom teachers, administrators, and academics. This community is divided by their educational philosophies and goals. Classroom teachers think that educational research is not relevant to the daily experiences of classroom life, and they feel that administrators are not empathetic with their problems. Therefore, many classroom teachers distance themselves from the professional community because they feel there is little benefit from participating on school committees, attending professional conferences, or reading the current educational literature. However, teachers who want to impact the direction of education expend time and energy in professional activities. If democratic pedagogy and teacher empowerment are to become realities, teachers must be willing to expend time and energy in non-classroom, occupational enterprises. The teachers in this study actively pursued professional activities by seeking advanced degrees, keeping current on the literature in their fields, attending professional conferences, and working on school and district committees. The three teachers participated in a variety of professional activities which impacted upon their work.

Commitment to Students

The caring relationship with students is part of the moral dimension of teacher identity. The relational philosophy is lived within the classroom through the interpersonal relations with students. The individuals in this study acted in ways that built an ethos of caring and democratic values in the classroom. They allowed themselves to trust students and for students to trust them in return. They did this through their daily interactions in the classroom and in their work with students in extracurricular activities.

Establishing trust in the classroom: Building responsibility. Sockett (1993) stated that the "professional teacher constructs a classroom complex in which trust is paramount" (p. 67). He noted that children trust a teacher because they know they will not be betrayed or cheated. In order to trust a person, one must have a sense that they can rely upon their word or that their behavior will not change from one situation to another. Van Manen (1994) expressed the notion: "In the classroom what determines the tone of the lesson foremost is the relational atmosphere between teacher and students" (p. 150). He also pointed out that in the complex reality of the classroom, teachers have to make pedagogical decisions from minute to minute, and that being reliable and trusted by students is necessary. Establishing trust in the classroom allows a positive pedagogical relationship to emerge. A teacher who attempts to establish a trusting environment must be willing to trust students to take responsibility for themselves and their learning. If teachers view students as untrustworthy, they will institute rigid rules to control their behavior. A hostile relationship results from this rigid control and creates a climate in which students avoid responsibility and learning. Students expend intellectual energy challenging the teacher rather than using their intellectual energy to learn. Building trust in the classroom takes place during the daily interactions between students and teacher. Throughout these daily interactions, the teachers in this study demonstrated that they were people who could be trusted not to humiliate or embarrass students and that they could be relied upon to guide and to help students learn.

Noddings (1992) noted that in a caring relationship, there must be response from the

cared for one. While most students are happy to be in a caring classroom, a few individuals can potentially destroy this atmosphere. Because of a small number of students, schools have established a rigid complex of rules to control behavior rather than providing counseling help so disruptive students can become part of a learning community. Once this carceral system is instituted, it creates its own necessity.

Among, these teachers, however, there was a lack of hostility throughout the daily interactions in the classroom. These teachers had found ways to teach without using humiliation and hostility and still maintain high standards. Even though Ellen, Mike, and David handled their classes without expressing hostility, this does not suggest that these teachers never experienced discipline problems. They were able to handle them without engendering hostility in the student.

Commitment to School as a Learning Community

One of the most difficult problems in many schools is to find teachers willing to do extracurricular work for which they are not financially compensated. However, the individuals in this study enjoyed taking part in activities outside the classroom and viewed it as part of their service to the school and youth. All three teachers in the study worked many hours outside the classroom.

The energy invested by these teachers into their schools shows their commitment to teaching and to their students. They engage the structures and forces of their schools. In this area where the state is less intrusive, they perfect their "know-how" to work within and against the grain of the institutions in which they work. They work within the institutional constraints and manage to bring about change.

The Intellectual Dimension of Democratic Teacher Identity

The intellectual dimension of democratic teacher identity is crucial because it allows student access to knowledge. However, this dimension must be embedded within a moral philosophy or it becomes a technical rational model as is prevalent is effective-teaching research. In an effort to develop a knowledge base for teaching, researchers identified teacher behaviors

that contributed to student achievement. This research has been summarized by Brophy and Good (1986), and Rosenshine and Stevens (1986). Shulman (1987a) contended that teaching-effectiveness research defined teaching as little more than a group of strategies for effective classroom management and learning skills development. This criticism by Shulman reinforced Apple's (1985) argument that because teachers are no longer required to create their own curricula, but to implement ready-made ones, they have become de-skilled and are then re-skilled in the use of classroom management strategies which replaced the 'educational skills' of program construction and planning. Giroux (1988b) argued that educational research on teacher effectiveness has reduced teacher work to a set of technical skills and proposed that teacher work be removed from the technical model to one in which teaching is seen as intellectual labor.

Although intellectual qualities such as critical consciousness (Freire, 1983, Giroux, 1988b), reflective teaching (Liston & Zeichner, 1987a, 1987b), and pedagogical reasoning (Shulman, 1987a) have been identified in the literature, the effective-teaching literature has provided the knowledge base for most teacher-education programs and teaching-reform proposals (Shulman, 1987a). Liston and Zeichner (1987a; 1987b) pioneered a model of reflective inquiry for teacher education. This model encouraged novice teachers to reflect upon the way their pedagogical methods affected students. Liston and Zeichner emphasized that this reflective inquiry must be embedded in a moral base. The most widely-known, but seldom practiced, intellectual quality is critical consciousness advocated by Freire (1983) and Giroux (1988b). All these qualities can contribute significantly to good pedagogical practice when used. However, critical consciousness and reflective inquiry have a greater significance for democratic education as they speak more to social equity.

The intellectual labor of teaching must be embedded in a relational or moral philosophy of education (Goodman, 1992a; Liston & Zeichner, 1987a, 1987b; Noddings, 1992; Sockett, 1993; van Manen, 1994). When the intellectual stands apart from the moral dimension, dominant interests exploit those who have been denied access to knowledge. They also use the well-educated who have been denied a critical consciousness as a tool. As Nasaw (1979) documented,

American public education has served as a sorting system through which students are processed into their particular slots in society. Through control of state legislatures and school boards, dominant interests dictate this sorting process of students which leads to a stratified society. However, it is the intellectual work of teachers that allows every student access to each domain of knowledge (Noddings, 1992; Frankenstein, 1992), and the intellectual labor of teachers can show students how structures of society oppress them (Apple, 1971, 1990; Freire, 1983; Giroux, 1988b). The intellectual labor of teachers allows transformative education to take place (Giroux, 1988b). Although the teachers in this study exhibited pedagogical reasoning, the intellectual qualities that seemed to contribute to democratic classrooms that emerged in this study were intellectual curiosity and critical reflection.

Intellectual Curiosity

There is a natural curiosity in humankind (Maslow, 1970) that compels individuals to observe their world and to inquire about it. This awe of the world and desire to learn about it contributes to a pedagogy in which the teacher becomes a learner. The teacher communicates this enthusiasm for learning to their students. Teaching can become an intellectual journey through an assimilation of knowledge and methods needed to become a democratic pedagogue. They are eager to learn more about their discipline, but also about the world of knowledge. The teacher is a learner because s/he is constantly developing new teaching methods to open up the world of knowledge to their students. The teacher considers his/her class as a place to learn, and s/he is willing to learn with students. The teacher becomes a learner in that s/he is willing to take his/her students beyond the facts and knowledge they possess to inquire into topics under discussion. They are not content to have mechanized, boring classes. This is the element of teacher intellectualism that makes the classroom an energizing and exciting place to be. Each of the teachers in this study had a special enthusiasm and love for their subject and a desire to engender this enthusiasm in students. Mike's intellectual understanding of history and government instilled a desire to become a political activist in the civil rights movement and consumer rights. It helped him to separate the nature of the world as "given" and as "possible." By recognizing the

possibilities of democratic struggle, he improved the society of his youth, and tried to promote these values in a new generation. Ellen, Mike, and David all possessed knowledge of their discipline, ability to translate the knowledge into understandable concepts, and willingness to create engaging learning experiences. They made knowledge accessible to students and the classroom an interesting place to be.

Critical Reflection

Critical reflection is the teaching quality that empowers teachers to critically examine societal structures and institutions. Dominant interests perpetuate themselves by creating the myths that structure and drive society. Textbook publishers are the major disseminators of myths and half-truths to students, and the teaching of social studies is dominated by textbooks (Apple, 1971; Loewen, 1995). In a review of 12 U.S. history textbooks, Loewen found that most textbooks provide irrelevant information and erroroneous facts. Students exit these textbook-driven courses without the ability to critically examine society. Traditional teachers do not allow students to inquire nor to question textbook knowledge, and they may omit important data in order to avoid controversy. Traditional social studies teachers feel compelled to defend hegemonic political and economic systems, and they prefer to teach by the textbook which presents a sanitized version of history (Loewen, 1995). Democratic teachers approach issues of equality and justice in an unbiased manner and allow students to learn from the mistakes made in past and present society.

The democratic pedagogue must also find space within institutional structures to use pedagogies that allow students more freedom for critical inquiry. They construct free spaces within curriculum constraints in which critical pedagogy can take place. Public secondary school teachers have little space in which to pursue democratic pedagogy because they must work within the constraints of state and county curriculum guidelines, state textbook selection procedures, and county and school administrative policies. Instead, they utilize "free spaces" (Evans and Boyte, 1986) within these constraints.

Personal Dimension of Democratic Teacher Identity

The personal dimension of democratic teacher identity is intimately related to the moral dimension, and when it is animated by the connectionist philosophy it is the component that gives teachers agency and empowers them to act upon their beliefs. Teachers must have a sense that their actions will make a difference and a willingness to do the labor needed for democratic education. The qualities that were most evident of the personal dimension were the energy that Ellen, Mike, and David expended in their work and their ability to take action within constraining practices and structures.

Sense of Efficacy

It is difficult to delineate those human qualities that compel a person to undertake enormous jobs. A sense of efficacy is a belief that the individual can bring about change. Some refer to this agency as empowerment. In a study on teacher empowerment, Kreisberg (1992) described this as "power with" individuals rather than dominating "power over" individuals. Kreisberg noted that this power with individuals is based on interconnections among individuals rather than the dominating, competitive types of relations that primarily exist in day-to-day relations. Mike exhibits this sense of efficacy because he is able to view his profession as one in which he can make a difference even though many in the teaching profession feel overwhelmed by the minutiae of the work. He is now in the Administration and Supervision Masters of Education program so that he may have a larger impact upon his profession. The ideal of efficacy and participation to bring about democracy is essential to democratic education. The teachers in this study accepted the realities of working in a large public high school, such as student absences, makeup work, interruptions to schedules by administrative procedures and large classes that impacted upon their teaching time. Many teachers who have to deal with the problems of high school become enervated and despondent, and their teaching becomes lethargic (Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; McNeil 1986; Powell, Farrar & Cohen, 1985; Sizer, 1985). Whereas, the teachers in this study viewed these problems as challenging rather than overwhelming obstacles.

Commitment to the Work Ethic

In all their activities working in the school and community, the teachers in this study were

hard workers. They gave extra energy to helping students achieve the goals of the class. The phenomenon of the mental and physical drain of secondary school teaching is well documented in the literature on teacher burnout (Adams, 1992; Goodlad, 1984; Natale, 1993; Sizer, 1985). Yet, these teachers never seemed to think about teaching as mentally and physically debilitating. The pleasure and satisfaction they derived from becoming engaged in the activities they carried out with their students energized and empowered them. An example of this is when Ellen facilitates a study session after school the day before each test in her class. These individuals did not see themselves as "self-made" but as the result of the combined efforts of many people in their family and community, as their professional development was heavily influenced by their work in the professional community. Through their teaching practices, they gave back to the human community.

Summary of Democratic Teacher Identity

In this paper, the democratic pedagogical identity has been discussed as the moral, intellectual, and personal dimensions of identity. These dimensions of democratic teacher identity interact with one another and empower the individual to establish democratic education. The key element integrating the different dimensions of teacher identity was the educational philosophy of connectionism (Goodman, 1992a). This philosophy drove the democratic ideal and commitment to social justice and democratic practices for these teachers. The teachers acted in ways that demonstrated their care for the world they inhabit and the people in that world. Ellen, David, and Mike give credence to the idea of a teacher corps imbued with a moral philosophy.

The democratic ideal practiced by these teachers is conceptualized in this study as a set of practices embedded within human connections. These democratic practices are not predetermined, but are contingent and temporally bound, seeking to recognize and include human diversity within a culture. This conceptualization of democracy is Deweyan in the respect that John Dewey conceived of democracy as a moral practice situated within a community (Bernstein, 1986). Although these teachers never articulated the idea of Deweyan democracy, their practices as described in the following sections illuminated and embodied such an ideal.

The intellectual labor of teachers allows transformative education to take place(Giroux, 1988b). Giroux (1988b) and Apple (1985, 1990) argued that educational research on teacher effectiveness has reduced teacher work to a set of technical skills, and proposed that teacher work be removed from the technical model to one in which teaching is seen as intellectual labor. Even though these arguments for teaching as an intellectual labor have been made, education-reform and teacher-education programs base their principles upon the teaching-effectiveness research (Shulman, 1987a). In this study, democratic pedagogy is viewed as an intellectual labor embedded in a moral philosophy with the purpose of providing access to all domains of knowledge to all students, and to be able to facilitate the development and growth of individual students.

The personal dimension of democratic teacher identity is intimately related to the moral dimension, and when it is animated by the connectionist philosophy, it is the component that gives teachers agency and empowers them to act upon their beliefs. Teachers must have a sense that their actions will make a difference and a willingness to do the labor needed for democratic education. Those qualities that propel the individual to take action upon their philosophical beliefs is discussed as the personal dimension.

Within the democratic teacher identity, there is an element of struggle, as these teachers must overcome the constraints that are placed upon teachers from the national, state, and county levels. They must deal in an equitable manner with children whose identities have been formed by a brutal society. At times, this democratic struggle can be characterized as a willingness to go into the world each day to carry out their practice in a democratic manner, not give in to oppression, nor to give up to despair as happens to so many classroom teachers. Commitment to the work ethic and a sense of efficacy gave these teachers the power and energy to bring about the kinds of teaching they felt was necessary.

Although there is a list of qualities of teacher identity, each of these teachers exhibited those qualities differently which allows for a great deal of variation in democratic teacher identity. Mike, for example, was a political activist. Ellen's life was integrated into the community and the

service of youth. David had pedagogical and content knowledge. However, each of them possessed qualities in the three dimensions of democratic teacher identity--moral, intellectual and personal. It would seem that it is the different domains that need to be present in a fully integrated, functioning pedagogue for democratic education to take place. As has been mentioned previously, as researchers have separated the intellectual from the personal and made it autonomous, the personal and moral dimension have lost their value in the classroom.

DEMOCRATIC TEACHING PRACTICES IN TRADITIONAL ENVIRONMENTS: TEACHING IN FREE SPACES

When discussing the possibilities of democratic education, teachers generally point to the time factor and to the pressures placed upon them to cover minimum standards or objectives as obstacles to democratic practices. Public secondary school teachers in Georgia and throughout the nation have little space within curricular constraints and educational policies in which to implement democratic practices. They seldom share decision making with students because they must work within the constraints of state and county curriculum guidelines, state textbook selection procedures, and county and school administrative policies. The teachers in this study created democratic classrooms by moving into "free spaces" (Evans and Boyte, 1986; Kreisberg, 1992; Miller, 1990; Wood, 1988) within these constraints. Evans and Boyte used the concept of free social spaces to describe how democratic movements such as the civil rights movement and the women's rights movement originated. They defined free spaces as local sites where individuals voluntarily participate in political activity and decision making. The black church community is an example of the free spaces in which black activists began their political work. Evans and Boyte noted that this democratic decision making at the local level engendered political efficacy. Wood used the term in relation to finding "free spaces" within the constraints of state and local curricula guidelines and county and school policies to promote a democratic classroom environment and to engage in democratic practice. Miller (1990) extended the concept of creating spaces within curriculum constraints by an insightful portrayal of public school teachers trying to make the

conditions of their work more meaningful. Particularly significant was Miller's view that change may come from within the "spaces" that teachers create to do their work rather than waiting for revolutionary change from above. In the free spaces of the curriculum, the teachers in this study were able to establish a democratic classroom, to allow students to engage in connected knowledge production, and to encourage students to become active knowers.

Democratic Teaching Practices

Letting go of control and allowing students to manage their learning usually occurs when teachers move outside the "everydayness" of schooling and trust students to be at the center of learning. Ellen described the everydayness of schooling when she would say, "we are just doing ordinary school stuff today." Considerable class time was devoted to "ordinary school stuff," but through effort and effective management, the teachers in the study found free spaces in which to engage in democratic practices. Some of the activities they implemented when teaching in free spaces included senate simulations, mock elections, field trips, reconstruction of historical events, and cooperative learning. When these kinds of activities take place, the classroom is shifted out of the everydayness of schooling and the class becomes a place of intense energy and student engagement in learning. Breaking the silence barriers and extending trust to students takes time and courage for teachers who work in controlled environments (Sockett, 1993; van Manen, 1994). In the free spaces of traditional school environments, democratic practices were created. These practices included establishing a democratic classroom climate, using connected knowledge, and active knowing.

Democratic Classroom Climate

Sockett (1993) and van Manen (1994) pointed out the necessity of teachers fulfilling their responsibility to students by effectively organizing the classroom for learning. In democratic classrooms, teachers must fulfill the responsibilities to ordinary school stuff, while creating areas for democratic practice. Ellen, Mike, and David allowed students to assume responsibility for their behavior and learning by clearly communicating expectations, by organizing classroom routines, and by allowing student ideas into classroom work and rules. They extended trust to students and

allowed them to collaborate in their learning. Democratically-structured classrooms promote a cooperative attitude in students. When students and learning are taken seriously, and when activities appeal to students, students are more cooperative (Shor, 1992).

Establishing trust in democratic classrooms. In conventional classrooms, students are viewed as not meriting trust, and they are not give responsibility for their own learning (McNeil, 1986; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985). Teachers who do not trust students to take responsibility for their behavior and learning, set up a power struggle or conditions of control in their classrooms as observed by McNeil (1988). McNeil reported that teachers instruct in rigid, inflexible ways in order to maintain control because they are judged by administrators and colleagues on the criteria of classroom management.

Sockett (1993) wrote that trust is an essential element of an effective classroom environment. He observed that when teachers organize activities that rely upon students, s/he is signaling them that s/he trusts them. Ellen, the eleventh-grade U. S. history teacher commented:

> I rely on students when organizing activities such as the civil war encampment and the Augusta tour. Students enjoy these activities and in their experience summaries, they always thank me for doing these extra activities. Many teachers don't use cooperative learning and other kinds of activities that I use because of the noise levels. (Interview, 10/93)

Trusting students to take responsibility for their behavior and learning is necessary for a democratic classroom to flourish.

Collaborative learning. The teachers in this study used cooperative learning to create communities in which students see themselves as having specific responsibilities to each other despite race, age, class, gender, or disability. Sapon-Shevin and Schniedewind (1991) asserted that:

> Cooperatively-structured learning is democratic. All students are active group participants and have equal access to learning opportunities and to resources. Within a cooperative classroom, democracy is not something which is studied about, but something which is

lived. Activities are utilized to encourage and provide skills to the tentative student. Teacher time and educational resources are provided equitably to all students regardless of ability, gender, or race. (p. 166)

Neither Ellen nor David's classes were tracked, they were heterogeneously grouped classes. In these classrooms, cooperative learning was used to establish democratic climates in which students were responsible for their learning and for others in the class. By allowing students responsibility for their learning and for helping one another, these teachers forged a democratic relationship through cooperative learning.

Classroom management. High school teachers must teach five classes of approximately 120-150 students a day. How can teachers do this without classes becoming chaotic and yet maintain some semblance of democracy and class participation? All the teachers in this study were well organized and had classroom routines for handling homework, daily assignments and testing. When a teacher has a specific routine for handling student work assigned on a daily basis, students understand classroom expectations. Also, students are more inclined to read assignments and do homework if the work is relevant to the class. Discipline problems, when they occurred, were handled in ways that did not create hostility. Ellen kept an after-school detention if her students had to be disciplined. Most of the time, they would use this time to study or to catch up on class work.

Expectations. Teaching for efficacy is not the same as having no standards or expectations for the student nor is it the same as teaching in ways that frustrate student learning. Teachers who target instruction at a low level are unconcerned about learning and students interpret this low-level knowledge as teachers not caring. When teachers do not communicate clearly their instruction and expectations, students become frustrated and defeated. The teachers in this study had high expectations and standards but they communicated them clearly and were willing to help students achieve these standards. Expectations were clearly expressed to students usually through a course syllabus. Students were also allowed to add topics to the syllabus if they chose. The teachers discussed topics that might be of interest to students, and students voted

whether to include them. Students could also contribute to class rules through a democratic voting procedure.

The teachers in the study maintained a democratic classroom climate by allowing students to assume responsibility for their behavior and learning, extending trust to students, by clearly communicating expectations, by organizing classroom routines, and by allowing student input into classroom work and rules. These classrooms were efficiently organized. The required curriculum was dealt with and students were prepared for exit examinations. The teachers did not evade responsibility to students to help them meet the required obstacles, yet they were able to establish a positive pedagogical relation with students and make the classroom a place of positive energy.

Connected Knowledge

The teachers in this study used connected knowledge as opposed to objectified and reified knowledge. Deeply-embedded cultural beliefs about knowledge as objective truths have led to school knowledge being objectified and reified. Concepts and theories making up a particular body of knowledge are given the image of objective truths by social actors and are accepted by society as "truths" (McLaren, 1989). Everhart (cited in Sleeter & Grant, 1991) described reifying knowledge as handling knowledge which is abstract, tenuous, and problematic as though it were concrete and real. Reified, inert bodies of knowledge become ensconced in state and local curriculum guidelines and textbooks. State requirements that these truths be transmitted to students have informed the development of conventional teaching practices. McNeil (1986, 1988b) described how teachers manage to transmit this inert knowledge to students. They break down the content into small bits of knowledge that can be memorized for multiple choice tests. She labeled this teaching practice as "defensive teaching," or teaching for control. Students reject the content of the curriculum as "school knowledge" which does not help them in the real world (McNeil, 1986). They consider knowledge they acquire in their work or other areas of life as real knowledge. When students acquire only one way of knowing--received knowledge-- their struggle for self is severely impaired.

The term connected knowledge is borrowed from Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) who used the term connected knowing. They differentiated between separate and connected knowing. In separate knowing, objectivity reigns and personal feelings and personal knowledge are extracted. During this wrenching away of the self, knowledge becomes abstract and bereft of meaning to the learner. Connected knowing connotes that the learner can respond to the text in a relational way. The learner tries to enter the frame of knowing of the author to understand their perspective, or to hear their voice. Noddings (1992) explained that caring for ideas is a quest for understanding ideas and when an idea is understood, the learner feels that the idea has responded. The idea resonates or speaks to the learner. The reason for using Belenky and colleagues' term is that there are many linkages that must be established to allow young people to learn.

Belenky and colleagues contended that learners reach their highest level of knowing at the constructivist level, when they understand that "all knowledge is constructed and the knower is an intimate part of the known" (p. 137). In democratic pedagogy, knowledge is viewed as a social construction, but in order to engage students in knowledge construction, teachers must first engage the student in learning. The teachers in this study were able to engage students in knowledge construction by making connections between knowledge and the student's culture and then by relating student's experiences to the range of human experience. Everhart (cited in Sleeter & Grant, 1991) explained that school knowledge empowers to the extent that it meshes with and augments students' knowledge. She pointed out that regenerative knowledge is contextually based in the experience of the student, therefore making it more meaningful.

Pickles (1985) pointed out that teachers' knowledge and students' knowledge overlap in a range of "commonplaces." Seeking out these commonplaces and then engaging students from there provides a starting point for education. From this starting point, student experiences must connect to the range of human experience and knowledge by connecting to the diverse voices and perspectives of humanity. James Banks (1991) advocated helping students

to view the human experience from the perspectives of a range of cultural, ethnic, and

social-class groups, and to construct their own versions of the past, present, and future. (p. 131)

Placing classroom discourse in the culture of the student and linking it with the range of human knowledge and experience enables the teacher to extend the student's understanding outward (Banks, 1991). Connected knowledge is making linkages to student culture, and extending their knowledge outward to the wider spheres of knowledge and experiences. This method of teaching unlocks the barriers to knowledge for all students.

The democratic teachers in this study strived for connected knowledge, by locating classroom discourse and knowledge in students' community and lives. This provided a common ground from which teacher and student could initiate a dialogue that expanded outward linking students to the range of human experience through different voices and perspectives.

Connected knowledge in U. S. history class. In order to bring history to life and to set history in the surrounding community, Ellen took the classes on a tour of historic Augusta. The group was accompanied by a representative of Historic Augusta who provided background information for the students. On the field trip, there were two busloads of about 160 students. Ellen and one other social studies teachers were on the two school busses. There were the two bus drivers, the tour guide and the observer.

Some of the comments students wrote in their experience summaries were:

There is more history in Augusta than I had originally thought. I never knew those places existed. I enjoyed learning about the style of living those people lived. I now understand why they treated the Indians and blacks so badly. They feared them and anything an American fears, he destroys. Thank you for allowing me to go, it was a new experience. (Excerpt from student paper, 11-29-93)

Finding commonplaces. Ellen used the personal, emotional issue of abortion that might affect students to illustrate how the Fugitive Slave Law affected Northerners.

By personalizing historical events, students can gain a better sense of the emotions that were prevalent during this turbulent period of history.

Speaking from different voices. In social studies textbooks, the struggle for a democratic society is a sanitized version that does not depict the conflict and controversy that flow through American history (Apple, 1971, 1990; Loewen, 1995). Democracy in America is depicted as an accomplished feat, not as a "great experiment" in the making, capable of regeneration. History must be told from the voices of the enslaved and oppressed as Ellen did as she portrayed the way that slaves fled to freedom on the Underground Railroad. She vividly recounted the dangers that Harriet Tubman experienced in her 19 trips to the south to free slaves as she could be recaptured and enslaved. Ellen described her visit to a home that had been used as a safe house. The Underground Railroad was a series of "safe houses" in which slaves could be hidden.

If students are to become guardians of a diverse nation with social injustices, but also the promise of democracy, what types of knowledge and ways of knowing are necessary? Asking questions and seeking answers must be part of the intellectual development of adolescents. They must be able to engage in knowledge construction through inquiry as Ellen's students did in the construction of the oral history. David allowed students free rein to construct bills around issues that could impact on their lives and to discuss these issues without the imposing personage of the teacher. Mike's students learned that the Bill of Rights plays a significant part in everyday life by their development of the Civil Rights posters. Placing knowledge in students' hands and connecting it to their lives empowers students and provides them with a vision of what the world might become. When knowledge is viewed as a construction or connected, and students become engaged in knowledge construction, they become active knowers.

Active Knowing

In traditional classrooms, learning is receiving various concepts, facts, and theories to be memorized, recalled, and given back to teachers. Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) referred to this type of learning as received knowledge, or listening to the voices of others with one's own voice remaining silent. Researchers (Boyer, 1983; Goodlad, 1984; McNeil, 1986; Powell, Farrar, & Cohen, 1985; Sizer, 1985) reported that throughout the nation, learning activities

consisted of written work, listening to teacher instructions and preparing for assignments. There was little sustained reading and writing, and most writing activity was filling in one- or two-word answers in blanks. Passive learning does not engage the mind in class activities (Sizer, 1985).

The democratic teachers in this study viewed learning as a process in which students can become engaged in the construction of knowledge. When learning becomes an active process, student minds are opened to the world and they can reimagine and revision their worlds for improved human relations and humane living.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) discussed "ways of knowing" as the way that an individual relates to the world of knowledge. They described separate knowing as the removal of the personal from knowledge, and connected knowing as when the learner makes a connection to the text or object of study. The inert knowledge that students are exposed to in most classrooms was called by them, "received knowledge." When inert knowledge is transmitted, the student listens to the expert, or the voice of others. The learner has not yet perceived that s/he is capable of reasoning nor of producing knowledge. Belenky and colleagues explained that students need to learn that knowledge is a construction and the knower is part of the known. In order to do this, learning becomes an active process in which students are engaged in critical reasoning and inquiry.

Part of intellectual development is the ability to engage in critical discourse. Belenky and colleagues (1986) remarked that the present system of schooling silences students as there are few opportunities for dialogue. Students learn that their knowledge is unimportant and their voice does not matter. Teachers in this study gave students the opportunity to struggle for voice by engaging in classroom dialogue.

Belenky and colleagues (1986) discussed developing new ways of knowing as part of the search for self. The main preoccupation of adolescents is the struggle for self (Papalia & Olds, 1992). If schools engage the mind of the adolescent, then school life will become an integral part of that self formation. At this critical juncture of adolescent development, they need to learn to think, read, and write critically, and to engage in class dialogue. To engage students in these

activities is to make learning an active process rather than the passive learning that is prevalent in most traditional schools (Goodlad, 1984). The teachers in this study encouraged different ways of learning and gave students guidance and support to develop different ways of knowing.

Building new ways of knowing. When introducing new ways of knowing, teachers often make the mistake of not allowing "time to develop alternate ways of learning and dealing with school" (Shor, 1992, p. 88). For example, many teachers who try cooperative learning without carefully teaching children how to work in groups may fail at implementing this method, and they blame this failure on students. The cooperative learning activities, previously described, were carefully structured by the teacher so that students knew what they were trying to accomplish and could see what they had learned. The teachers allowed students to work in cooperative groups several times before they became adept at the process.

Ellen used a questioning/discussion type of dialogue in the U. S. history class and as it is sometimes difficult to take notes during a discussion, she uses group work to show students how to take notes during class discussions. To develop critical thinking, Ellen had students examine a picture in the textbook of the "Boston Massacre" to find discrepancies between the picture and the event. Activities such as these were carried out throughout the year and are important to help students read and think critically.

David expressed that helping students learn how to learn was one of his goals. He said that was the reason he used activities that developed critical reading and critical thinking abilities. In order to gain the critical ability to make public decisions, he engages students in activities to illuminate the "gray" areas of society and stimulates them to think critically about such issues. Through a critical look at supreme court ruling, Shepherd v. Maxwell, 1966, the class examined the tension between two constitutional amendments, the sixth amendment guarantee to a "speedy and public trial" and the first amendment guarantee of the right to a free press.

All three of the teachers used several different types of instructional strategies in their courses to stimulate critical thinking. As David said, "I like to present information in various ways to stimulate thinking." David was adept at using new technology when it improved the teaching-

learning process. The process of the primary election was elucidated clearly in his class with the use of a laserdisc. Because a laserdisc can be searched through more quickly, he could demonstrate how the presidential primary system works. Students could grasp the complexity of the primary system more easily by viewing on video what is often called a "patchwork quilt" design of the primary process.

When using innovative teaching methods and learning activities, these teachers were aware that students may not "get it" the first time around and would need practice in these activities. Students need guidance and practice in learning to inquire, to think critically, engage in cooperative learning, and to engage in classroom discourse.

Classroom dialogue: developing voice. Education can be seen as a "struggle for voice" (Starrs, quoted in Banks, 1991, p. 131). The teachers in this study valued and encouraged dialogue and this attention to dialogue encouraged the development of a classroom environment in which students gained voice. Mike noted that he tries to promote respect and diversity in his classroom through class discussion.

The teachers in this study forged new practices in free spaces of the curriculum to create democratic classrooms. Inspired by the desire to promote the intellectual and socioemotional growth of adolescents, they created classroom climates in which students were trusted to take responsibility for their learning. The classroom climate also enabled students to develop speaking ability and to gain voice. The struggle for self and voice is part of adolescent growth, and these democratic classrooms provide a place where students felt at ease.

Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1986) view the development of different ways of knowing as an integral part of self formation. It is essential to give access to the worlds of knowledge to all students. The teachers in this study empowered students by using knowledge as connected to students' lives. They found commonplaces to build a ground from which intellectual development could take place. They viewed knowledge as a construction, and allowed students to become active knowers through inquiry and other projects of interest to them.

Summary of Democratic Teaching Practices

The teaching practices that emerged in this study were embedded in a connectionist philosophy. Although these teachers worked in traditional environments with constraining factors, they managed to move into free spaces of the curriculum to implement a democratic philosophy. They were able to establish a positive pedagogical relationship with students, use connected knowledge, and organize learning experiences that contributed to student responsibility. A large portion of their time was spent in the everydayness of schooling, but they managed to move outside the everydayness to create solidarity with students, and engage them in intense learning experiences.

CONCLUSIONS

The lives and teaching practices of the democratic pedagogues in this study constituted a discourse of democratic education. This discourse embodied the ideals of a democratic purpose for education, the caring relationship with children and the world they inhabit, and teaching as knowledge production. A discourse of democratic education can revitalize the factory model of schooling that inhabits current systems. Teachers and administrators need to be empowered at the local levels, however, this empowerment must be animated by a democratic goal or purpose. Without a discourse of democracy, schooling will continue to implement the same practices of education under a new name such as restructuring.

Teachers in traditional schools can engage in democratic practices by moving into free spaces. A democratic pedagogy is possible by transforming the classroom climate to one of caring, and by allowing students to take responsibility for their learning and behavior. In order for this to happen, teachers need to extend trust to students by involving them in classroom decision making and learning experiences. Teachers need to change the way that knowledge is handled in the classroom and to place knowledge in the culture of the student and extend it to the larger human experience. Teachers need to help students to become active knowers by including them in inquiry and collaborative learning activities. Democratic pedagogy is the classroom manifestation of a democratic vision of education.

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